



TAPS Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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Reviewed by: Taryam American Private School Safeguarding Team

Our Vision: To create an outstanding and creative educational environment which empowers students to achieve their potential and to become life-long learners and future leaders.

Rational

The promotion of wellbeing is central to Taryam American Private School vision to enable children and young people to achieve their full potential and contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of their community. Since in the school environment, social and emotional skills do not exist in isolation but interact with cognitive skills development, the role of the school is now understood as a place which develops the ‘whole child’, who should leave school with a balanced set of cognitive, social and emotional skills to face the challenges of the 21st century (OECD 2014). TAPS recognizes the importance of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and aims to establish, promote and maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all members of the school community through workplace practices, and by encouraging staff, students and their families to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm TAPS commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing by:

- Providing a safe, welcoming and supportive environment to staff and students
- Promoting a culture of respect, fairness and equality
- Embedding social and emotional learning into the curriculum and professional learning
- Ensuring families, staff and students are key partners in mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

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Implementation

TAPS currently adopts a Whole School Approach to promote wellbeing through:

- Raising awareness of wellbeing.
- Regular review and development of policies relating to wellbeing such as critical incidents, bullying, child protection, etc.
- Professional development for school staff in wellbeing promotion.
- Implementing universal evidence-based programs and interventions.
- Establishing school structures for supporting staff and students.
- Establishing mechanisms such as student councils to ensure that the voices of children are heard.
- Planning, collaborating and appropriate sharing of information between schools when children are making the transition into primary school or moving into post-primary school.

Expected Benefits of the Whole School Approach

Adopting a whole school approach has been found internationally to produce a wide range of educational and social benefits for individual children including:

- Better learning results
- Increased self-esteem
- Improved behavior
- Lowered incidence of bullying

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- Increased inclusion
- School environment is safer and more secure
- Improved relationships within the school
- More involvement of parents/guardians
- More proactive in promotion of staff wellbeing

Responsibilities

School Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff member and all stakeholders are aware of this policy;
- Enabling and supporting the creation of a school environment and culture that is supportive of positive mental wellbeing;
- Ensuring that every student at TAPS has at least one adult advocate to refer to;
- Acting immediately to support a staff member or other person when a potential mental health issue is identified or has been reported;
- Actively supporting and contributing to the implementation of this policy, supporting materials and initiatives;
- Monitoring the implementation and review of this policy, supporting materials and initiatives.

Staff Members are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding this policy, supporting materials and initiatives and seeking clarification where required;
- Considering this policy, supporting materials and initiatives while completing work-related activities and at any time and while assigning homework and/ or projects to students;
- Supporting fellow staff member and others in their awareness of this policy;

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- Supporting and contributing to TAPS aim of providing a mentally healthy and supportive environment for all workers.

All Members of TAPS Community are encouraged to:

- Take reasonable care of their own mental health and wellbeing, including physical health
- Take reasonable care that their actions do not affect the health and safety of other people in the workplace.

Wellbeing Protective Factors include:

- Positive relationships with peers and teachers - including positive teacher classroom management strategies and a sharing of positive behavior management practices with parents.
- A sense of belonging, security and connectedness to our school through the creation of a positive school climate and participation in school and community activities.
- Opportunities for social and emotional learning including the development of attention and planning, self-awareness, emotional regulation, relationships, responsible decision making and problem solving skills.
- Opportunities for the development of knowledge and skills providing a sense of mastery and self-efficacy.
- Fostering expectations, recognizing contributions, effort and achievement and providing opportunities for success.
- Protocols and support systems that proactively support children and their families should difficulties arise.
- Opportunities to develop the necessary skills to cope with using online technology in a safe and appropriate way.

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- Wellbeing of school personnel and professional development for teachers and staff.

Impacts on the school from individual who experience wellbeing challenges may include:

- Increased absenteeism
- Potential high staff turnover
- Low morale and motivation
- Lost productivity
- Inability to deliver objectives

Evaluation

The policy is to be reviewed annually based on data from different sources. Suggested

Measures of Success include:

- Student attendance
- Improved academic performance
- Successful transition of students
- Data gathered in school e.g. surveys, interviews, checklists
- Data gathered through consultation with children, parents, teachers and other staff.
- Information from inspection reports.

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